



# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
Office of Economic Advisors

FOR MILWAUKEE/WOW COUNTIES  
MILWAUKEE, WASHINGTON, OZAUKEE AND WAUKESHA COUNTIES

May 2004

## Unemployment Down and Jobs Up in April

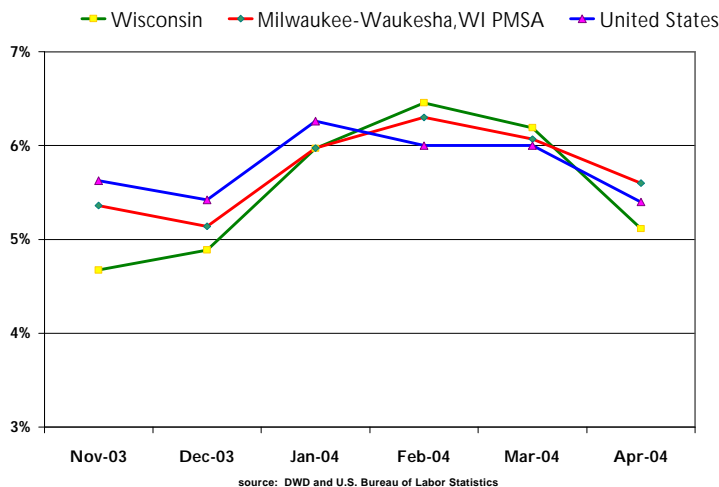
April's unemployment rate for **Milwaukee County** registered a clip of 6.7 percent. This marked a decrease over the month of two-tenths of a percent point and an annual decrease of six-tenths. The annual perspective showed that Milwaukee County's labor force had edged up in its number of employed residents by almost 7,400 and that its number of un-

employed residents had declined by about 2,600.

**Washington County's** unemployment rate dipped to 4.6 percent from 5.5 percent in March. Annually, Washington showed the most dramatic decrease in rate of the Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA counties down 1.3 percent points.

The lowest unemployment rate in the metro area in April belonged to **Ozaukee County** at 3.2 percent. Ozaukee also possessed the largest monthly decrease in unemployment rate down by 1.4 percent points from March. This was the first April unemployment rate in Ozaukee to be lower than the previous April since 1998. April's rate was lower than last April's by 1.1 percent points.

### Six-Month Unemployment Rate Watch



**Waukesha County's** unemployment rate in April came in at 4.1 percent, down monthly and annually by six-tenths and seven-tenths of a percent point, respectively. The annual decrease was precipitated by an increase of about 3,400 more employed residents and a decrease of about 1,300 unemployed.

The unemployment rate of the **Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA**, not seasonally adjusted, decreased over the month by one-half of a percent point to 5.6

### Civilian Labor Force Estimates for Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA counties: April 2004

	Wisconsin			Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA			Milwaukee County		
	Apr-04	Mar-04	Apr-03	Apr-04	Mar-04	Apr-03	Apr-04	Mar-04	Apr-03
Labor force	3,082,944	3,092,320	3,053,672	825,097	825,706	817,766	488,357	487,526	483,558
Employed	2,925,248	2,900,919	2,864,120	778,886	775,589	766,276	455,880	453,950	448,499
Unemployed	157,696	191,401	189,552	46,211	50,117	51,490	32,477	33,576	35,059
% Unemployed	5.1%	6.2%	6.2%	5.6%	6.1%	6.3%	6.7%	6.9%	7.3%
	Washington County			Ozaukee County			Waukesha County		
	Apr-04	Mar-04	Apr-03	Apr-04	Mar-04	Apr-03	Apr-04	Mar-04	Apr-03
Labor force	70,109	70,511	69,915	48,634	49,154	48,383	217,997	218,513	215,910
Employed	66,915	66,631	65,831	47,070	46,871	46,308	209,021	208,136	205,637
Unemployed	3,194	3,880	4,084	1,564	2,283	2,075	8,976	10,377	10,273
% Unemployed	4.6%	5.5%	5.8%	3.2%	4.6%	4.3%	4.1%	4.7%	4.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and DWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Figures are not seasonally adjusted and current month's data are preliminary

## Industry Employment Estimates for the Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA: April 2004

Place of Work Employment in 1,000's	Wisconsin			Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA		
	Apr-04	Change since Mar-2004	Change since Apr-2003	Apr-04	Change since Mar-2004	Change since Apr-2003
All Industries	2,799.7	39.6	38.1	830.8	8.4	-0.4
Construction/Natural Resources	125.0	8.4	5.4	30.6	2.2	-1.3
Manufacturing	502.6	3.7	-1.3	134.4	0.9	-3.2
Retail Trade	319.0	3.9	8.1	80.1	0.9	-0.6
Wholesale Trade	115.9	1.5	3.6	40.7	0.6	0.7
Transport/Warehouse/Utilities	105.3	0.6	0.0	30.7	0.4	0.1
Financial Activities	158.6	-0.5	2.7	61.1	-0.6	2.9
Education and Health Services	375.0	0.8	10.7	133.4	-0.3	5.0
Leisure and Hospitality	243.2	8.5	7.5	64.9	2.4	1.7
Info./Prof./Bus.and Other Services	434.1	10.1	9.0	161.2	1.8	-2.3
Information	48.9	0.0	-0.8	19.5	0.2	1.0
Professional and Business Services	255.4	10.6	12.3	102.4	1.9	-1.4
Other Services	129.8	-0.5	-2.5	39.3	-0.3	-1.9
Fed/State/Local Government	421.0	2.6	-7.6	93.7	0.1	-3.4

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and DWD, Current Employment Statistics. Figures are rounded and may not sum to total. Current month's figures are preliminary

percent. Net labor force growth over the month showed a slight decline as a decrease in the number of unemployed was slightly larger than the increase in those employed. This is fairly common in April from a monthly perspective. The monthly unemployment rate decrease was slightly larger than average for April. Annually the metro area shows almost 12,700 more employed residents and approximately 5,700 fewer unemployed.

The monthly nonfarm wage and salary estimates for the **Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA** showed monthly growth of 8,400 jobs, overall, to a total of 830,800 jobs. This was better than average growth for the month of April. Every sector gained employment since March with the exceptions of financial activities employment (-600 jobs) and educational and health services (-300 jobs). Other services employment also showed a slight decline of 300 jobs over the month. Ironically, the financial activities and education/health services sectors have been growth sectors in the state and metro area and given one month's slight decline there is no reason to

believe that they will continue a downward trend. Leisure and hospitality employment showed the largest monthly gain in April with 2,400 more jobs (+3.8%). Construction employment followed closely gaining 2,200 jobs (+7.7%). Professional and business services also showed a healthy increase of 1,800 jobs. All of these mentioned gains were about average, if not a bit higher, for April. Manufacturing employment gained 900 jobs monthly and is the first April gain in this sector's employment since a 200-job gain in 2000. Both trade industries, retail and wholesale, showed monthly gains of 900 and 600 jobs, respectively.

The annual industry employment figures continued to show a decline in the job count. The total industries' figure is 400 jobs lower than it was in April of 2003. Nonetheless, this is the smallest job decrease on an annual basis the metro area has experienced since the downturn began reflecting annual job losses beginning in April 2001. It is hopeful that the metro area will be turning the corner into positive job growth territory in the next few months just as the majority of Wisconsin's

metro areas have.

Compared to April 2003, education and health services; and Financial activities employment have combined for 7,900 more jobs or about four percent growth. Leisure and hospitality employment is higher by almost three percent or 1,700 jobs. Wholesale trade is up over the year for the fourth consecutive month.

The goods producing sectors, construction and manufacturing, show yearly employment decreases. Services-providing sectors such as government, other services, professional and business services, and retail trade also show annual employment losses.

Direct questions and comments to:  
**Eric Grosso, State Labor Economist**

201 East Washington Avenue  
Room A400

Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Phone: 608.266.7034

e-mail: [eric.grosso@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:eric.grosso@dwd.state.wi.us)

**Find the most current labor market info at:**  
[WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)